

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 PA-01 PRS-01

DOT-00 DLOS-06 FMC-01 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 /083 W

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R 220910Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4837

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 0833

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EMIN, ETRN EWWT, PFORR MZ SF

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION VISITS PORT OF MAPUTO

REF: MAPUTO 819

1 EMBASSY LOCAL EMPLOYEE SOARES-REBELO CONTACTED MOZAMBIQUE RAIL AND PORT AUTHORITY (CFM) OFFICIAL TO DISCUSS ONE-DAY VISIT JULY 20 OF DELEGATION OF ABOUT 40 SOUTH AFRICANS TO PORT OF MAPUTO.

2. LOCAL SAW LIST OF NAMES, AND NOTICED THAT TWO PEOPLE WERE FROM SOUTH AFRICAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND ONE FROM MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, OTHERS WHO WERE REPRESENTATIVES OF SOUTH AFRICAN SHIPPING FIRMS, PRIVATE COMPANIES AND TRADE ASSOCIATIONS INCLUDING ONE FROM NISSAN COMPANY, AND SOME FROM SOUTH AFRICAN CHROME MINING COMPANIES.

3. CFM TOLD REBELO THAT DELEGATION CAME AT THEIR OWN REQUEST, NOT AT INVITATION OF GPRM AS REPORTED REFTEL. GPRM AGREED TO
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VISIT, BUT DID NOT SUPPLY ANY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. DELEGATION

REPORTEDLY TALKED ONLY WITH CFM OFFICIALS.

4. SOUTH AFRICANS APPARENTLY WANTED DEMONSTRATE INTEREST IN MAPUTO PORT AND TO SEE FIRST HAND IF POST HAD CAPABILITY HANDLE INCREASED SOUTH AFRICAN TRAFFIC.

5. SOUTH AFRICANS REPORTEDLY TOLD CFM THEY COULD GUARANTEE FOLLOWING BULK TRAFFIC THROUGH MAPUTO:

(A) 500,000 TONS OF TRANSVAAL COAL TO BE TRANSSHIPPED FROM MAPUTO TO CAPETOWN FOR LOCAL USE.

(B) 1,250,000 TONS ANNUALY OF "MAGNETITE" ORE FROM BULABORA (PHONETIC) AREA NEAR JOHANNESBURG.

(C) 20,000 TONS PER MONTH OF GENERAL CARGO, CONSISTING MAINLY OF KNOCKED-DOWN JAPANESE CARS FOR ASSEMBLY IN SOUTH AFRICA.

6 COMMENT SOUTH AFRICANS INDICATED THAT IT IS CHEAPER TO SHIP COAL THROUGH MAPUTO RATHER THAN OVERLAND TO CAPETOWN. TRANSVAAL COAL HAS BEEN SHIPPED MAPUTO-CAPETOWN IN PAST, BUT EMBASSY DOES NOT KNOW PREVIOUS QUANTITIES, THEREFORE CANNOT COMMENT ON WHETHER 500,000 TONS ANNUALLY REPRESENTS INCREASE. CFM OFFICIALS TERMED ORE IN PARA 5 (B) ABOVE AS "MAGNETITE", BUT EMBASSY UNSURE OF WHAT ORE INCLUDED UNDER THIS RUBRIC.

CFM ALSO STATED THAT HANDLING COSTS IN DURBAN ARE STILL HIGHER THAN MAPUTO, DESPITE RELATIVELY HIGH WAGES PAID AFRICAN WORKERS HERE, AND NOTABLE DECLINE IN PRODUCTIVITY IN MAPUTO PORT. WITH PREVIOUS REPORTING FROM DURBAN AND JOHANNESBURG IN MIND, EMBASSY BELIEVES ACTION BY SOUTH AFRICANS INDICATES (A) CONTINUING INTEREST IN PORT OF MAPUTO BY SOUTH AFRICANS AND (B) DESIRE BY SOUTH AFRICANS TO SHIFT LARGE PORTION OF BULK SHIPPING TO MAPUTO TO ALLEVIATE CONGESTION ON SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS AND PORTS. EMBASSY DOES NOT KNOW HOW THIS ACTION RELATES TO INCREASED RHODESIAN BULK TRAFFIC ON SOUTH AFRICAN SYSTEM.

7 EMBASSY NOTES THAT WHILE VISIT NOT PUBLICIZED HERE, AND NO HIGH-RANKING GPRM OFFICIALS MET WITH DELEGATION, RPRM ACCEDED TO VISIT AND CFM EXTENDED EVERY COURTESY TO GROUP, EMBASSY DOES NOT KNOW GPRM REACTION TO TRAFFIC
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GUARANTEES, BUT BEST GUESS IS IT IS LIKELY TO BE FAVORABLE. CERTAINLY ONE REASON GPRM ACQUIESCED TO VISIT IS NEED TO REASSURE SOUTH AFRICANS AND TO MAINTAIN REVENUE AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE INFLOW GENERATED FROM SOUTH AFRICAN TRAFFIC.

8. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED RELIABLE INDICATION THAT VISIT MAY HAVE BEEN AT INVITATION OF GPRM. HOWEVER, BOTH SAG AND GPRM LIKELY TO SAY VISIT INITIATED BY OTHER GOVERNMENT IN ORDER PROTECT OWN

INTERESTS. COMMENTS FROM SOUTH AFRICAN ADDRESSEES INVITED.

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